

Thank you, and may God bless you all.  
Thank you very much.

*Note: The President spoke at 11:02 a.m. in the General Assembly Hall at the United Nations.*

## Message to the Senate Transmitting the Organization of American States-United States Headquarters Agreement *September 21, 1992*

*To the Senate of the United States:*

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to approval, I transmit herewith the Headquarters Agreement Between the Government of the United States of America and the Organization of American States ("the Agreement"), signed at Washington on May 14, 1992. I transmit also, for the information of the Senate, the Report of the Department of State with respect to this Agreement.

The Agreement will place the status of the Organization of American States ("OAS") in the United States on a clear legal basis and will underscore our commitment to the Organization. The Agreement in large measure elaborates and codifies the existing arrangements governing the presence of the headquarters of the OAS in the United States. However, it departs from existing arrangements in several respects. It extends diplomatic agent-level privileges and immunities to a small number of high level OAS officials. It exempts non-U.S. national OAS officials from state and local as well as federal income tax on their OAS earnings and benefits. It affords the OAS immunity from judicial process but in exchange for such immunity obligates the OAS to resolve certain (mainly commercial) disputes through a mutually agreed mechanism or, failing agreement, to submit such disputes to binding arbitration.

Although the Agreement provides that the U.S. will not exclude or expel OAS officials or experts for acts performed in their official capacity, Article XVII specifically

states that "nothing in this Agreement shall be construed as in any way limiting the right of the United States to safeguard its own security, or its right completely to control the entrance of aliens into any territory of the United States."

Other provisions address the form and substance of the Official Travel Document; the procurement of communications facilities by the OAS; the disposition of the headquarters property in the event the OAS should cease to maintain headquarters in Washington; the provision of public services to the headquarters; and the privileges and immunities accorded OAS officials and experts.

No implementing legislation is required for the United States to perform its obligations under the Agreement. As a treaty, the Agreement will override federal, state, and local law with respect to privileges, immunities and exemptions to the extent such laws are inconsistent with its provisions. The provisions of the Agreement are not inconsistent with U.S. immigration laws, which will provide the basis for meeting the commitments established by the Agreement for the admission of aliens.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Agreement and give its advice and consent to approval.

GEORGE BUSH

The White House,  
September 21, 1992.